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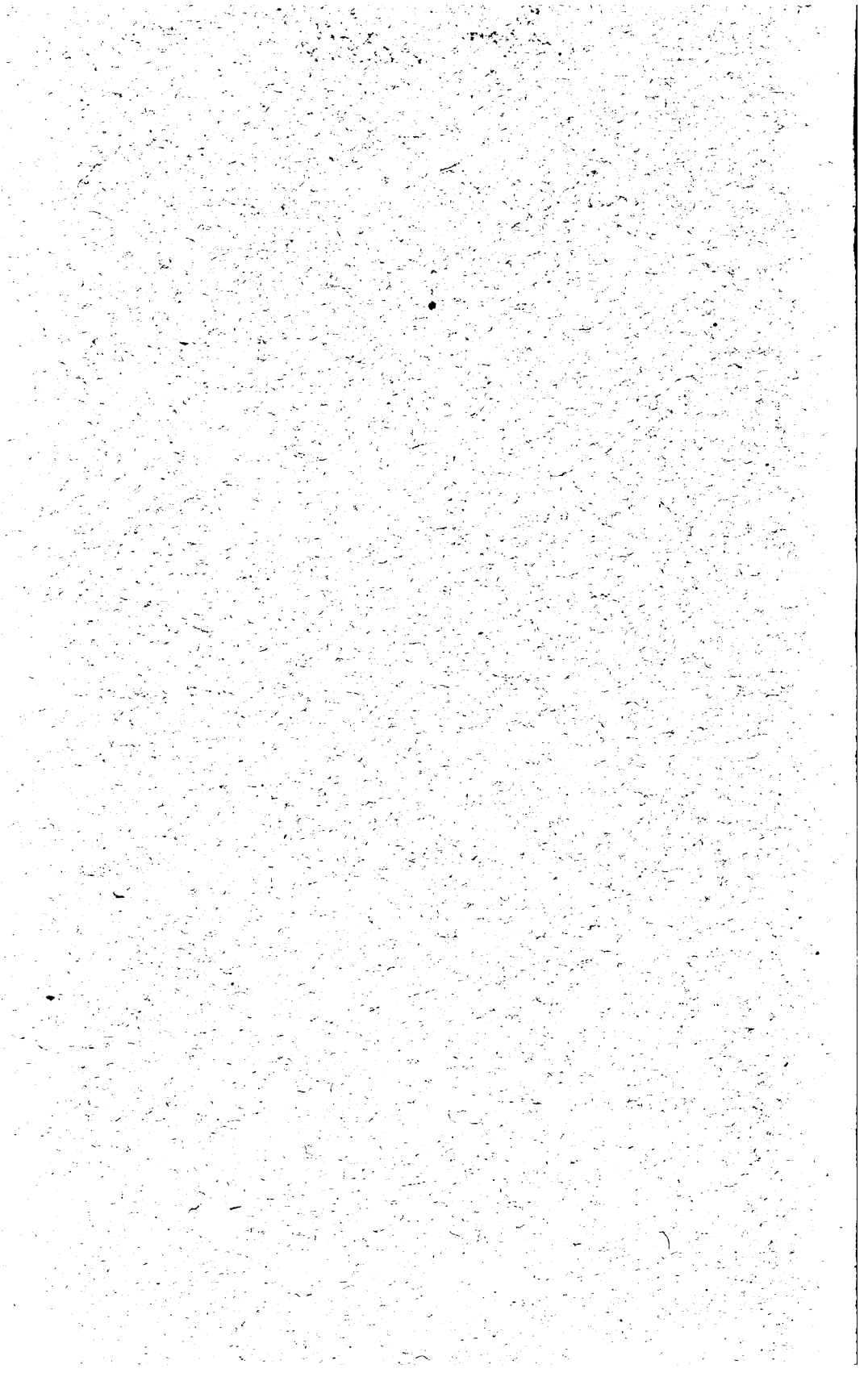

From Author

UNION LEAGUE CLUB.

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RESTORATION OF AMERICAN SHIPPING

AND

DEFENCE OF OUR HARBORS, OCEAN AND LAKE

NEW YORK
BURR PRINTING HOUSE
1883.

SHALL OUR SHIPS BE PURCHASED ABROAD OR BE BUILT AT HOME, AND HOW SHALL OUR SHIP BUILDING BE ENCOURAGED?

FOR more than half a century after the origin of our Government, the profits of navigation were more tempting to capitalists than were those of manufactures or agriculture, and hence the activity in the former pursuit which distinguished the United States for a long period of its history. We then had advantages for shipbuilding possessed by no other commercial nation. In convenient localities there existed cheap and abundant supplies of timber, then the chief material of construction. Our great extent of coast and inland navigation alone offered great encouragement to those who built and navigated vessels; but our superior facilities made the ocean trade especially the object of attention, and our flag appeared on every sea. Out of one million tons of vessels held by us at an early period, over seven hundred thousand were said to have been devoted to the ocean trade. To the building, and particularly to the sailing of vessels, young men of enterprise, education, and good standing were attracted as to no other employment. In the papers relating to the commercial marine of Great Britain, published in 1848, Consul Peters, of Philadelphia, thus refers to this early tendency, unknown to many now on the stage:

"A lad intended for the higher grades of the merchant service in this country (United States), after having been at school for some years, and acquired (in addition to the ordinary branches of school learning) a competent knowledge of mathematics, navigation, ship's husbandry, and perhaps French, is generally apprenticed to some responsible merchant, in whose counting-house he remains two or three years, or at least until he becomes familiar with exchanges, or such other commercial matters as may best qualify him to represent his principal in foreign countries. He is then

sent to sea, generally in the capacity of second mate, from which he gradually rises to that of captain."

This early training gave us great superiority in the masters of vessels. "During the first half of this century," says Mr. W. S. Lindsay, in his valuable English work, of four volumes, published in 1874, entitled "History of Merchant Shipping and Ancient Commerce,"* "the masters of American vessels were, as a rule, greatly superior to those who held similar positions in English ships, arising in some measure from the limited education of the latter, which was not sufficient to qualify them for the higher grades of the merchant service." He also states, so sagacious were we in inventing labor-saving instruments for use on board of our vessels, that "twenty seamen in an American merchant ship could do as much work, and probably with more ease to themselves, than thirty in a British vessel of similar size."

Even in our colonial condition, American superiority in whaling voyages and in the ocean fisheries, to which we were driven by being debarred by the mother country from manufactures, is thus referred to by the great orator Burke, in his speech in Parliament on "Conciliation with America":

"No sea," he says, "but what is vexed by their fisheries. No climate but what is witness of their toils. Neither the perseverance of Holland, nor the activity of France, nor the dexterous and firm sagacity of English enterprise, ever carried this most perilous mode of hard industry to the extent to which it has been pushed by this recent people—a people who are still, as it were, but in the gristle, and not yet hardened into the bone of manhood."

Our ships' officers were not merely mariners from practice. They understood the structure of vessels, the art of navigation, and the mode of managing on sea and on shore the important trusts committed to them.

Our navy shared in the great benefits which accrued to us from our experience in navigation. England was obliged, in the hour of exigency, to resort to impressment to man her ships of war, but the overflow from our extensive merchant marine filled our infant navy with willing officers and men. Our naval achievements in the war of 1812, which

* Historical part largely taken from this work.

excited surprise and spread consternation throughout England, were largely due to the training, skill, and daring obtained in our mercantile marine. Hull, who over the Guerriere won our first naval victory; Bainbridge, who took the Java; and Decatur, who captured the Macedonian—distinguished ornaments of the navy of 1812—all sprang from our mercantile marine. The efficiency of a navy will always largely depend on extensive commerce controlled by enterprising merchants; abundance of shipping, and dexterous and numerous mariners. It is an admitted truth that we can have neither a great ocean traffic without a navy adequate for its protection, nor an efficient navy without such ocean traffic. They are mutually dependent.

To this long-continued success in the building and navigation of merchant vessels, pursued with vigor at the expense of other industries essential to the completeness of the nation, may be attributed that overweening confidence which led us to abandon the policy of protection to our shipping interests, and to invite the reciprocal competition of all nations. This confidence was especially felt by those intrusted with the Government in 1847, when a step of great magnitude in its disastrous effect upon our navigation was taken.

During Mr. Polk's administration, from 1845 to 1849, and General Pierce's, from 1853 to 1857, the theory of "free trade" prevailed, not only as to shipping, but as to manufactures. This phrase "free trade" had a wholly different signification from the "free trade" of the war of 1812. Our assertion of it then resulted from the action of France and England in the two great wars, in which, excepting for a short interval, they were from 1793 to 1815 engaged. As neutrals, the carrying trade had largely devolved upon us, and we entered the ports of both belligerents. But in November, 1806, Napoleon, by the Berlin Decree, interdicted our trade with Great Britain; and Great Britain, by her Orders in Council, in November, 1807, interdicted it with France, and in December following Napoleon issued his Milan decree. In the recent work on the war of 1812, by Theodore Roosevelt, himself a free-trader, he defines

accurately the "free trade" of that period as meaning that our trade should not be hindered except by the power with which we traded. That is to say, that we should be left free to trade with England without interruption from France, and with France without interruption from England; that neutral vessels made neutral goods; or, as it was more commonly expressed, that free ships made free goods.

The interdict by France of trade with Great Britain or her colonies, and that of Great Britain, of trade with France and her tributary states and colonies, included, excepting Sweden, all Europe, and also all English and French colonies. The right of search was also claimed and exercised over our vessels by both powers—by France in the earlier of the two wars in seeking for cargoes contraband of war, and by Great Britain afterward with a view to impressment. As to impressment, we claimed that our seamen in our vessels were entitled to the same rights as on land. These far-reaching interdicts by the one belligerent to fetter our neutral trade with the other (we were the only neutrals except Sweden), and the impressment of our seamen, we denounced as a violation of the freedom in trade and of the rights which the laws of nations allowed, and the cry, universal and just, arose throughout our country, of "Free trade and sailors' rights." It was aimed more especially at the English, who sought to destroy our growing carrying trade. The "free trade" of 1812 claimed the protection awarded by the law of nations. The judicial tribunals of Great Britain reversed the international rule, that free ships made free goods, and confiscated vast numbers of our vessels, and we appealed from their courts to the arbitrament of war. By the Treaty of Paris of 1856, Great Britain and France acceded to the policy we had long contended for, that free ships make free goods.

The free trade in navigation of Mr. Polk's administration was not of this character. Letting in foreign ships on an equality with ours, free of discriminating duties, or tonnage dues, was similar to the policy which would let in the manufactures of Great Britain free of duties. In this spirit, Mr. Bancroft, our minister at the Court of St. James'

in 1847, acting upon instructions from Washington, addressed a communication to Lord Palmerston, then British Premier, which led to the repeal of the navigation laws of Great Britain, and to the suspension of protection to our own shipping. This bold document—bold in view of impending changes—was as follows:

"The undersigned, minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America, has the honor to inquire of Viscount Palmerston, Her British Majesty's principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if Her Majesty's Government is inclined to remove existing restrictions on international commerce.

"*Universal reciprocity in the widest sense* is held by the American Government as the only thoroughly appropriate basis for intercourse between two great nations. The prohibition of the indirect trade has but restrained enterprise; it has done good to neither country. To abrogate it would at once set free dormant commercial wealth without injuring any one.

"Should Her Majesty's Government entertain similar views, the undersigned is prepared, on the part of the American Government, to propose that British ships may trade from any port of the world to any port in the United States, and be received, protected, and in respect to charges and duties be treated like American ships, if reciprocally American ships may in like manner trade from any port in the world to any port under the dominion of Her British Majesty.

"The removal of commercial restrictions, while it would be of mutual advantage to the material interests of both countries, would not but give openings to further relations of amity between them, and by its influence on the intercourse of nations, create new guarantees for the peace of the world.

"The undersigned, etc.,

"GEORGE BANCROFT."

Lord Palmerston replied in a favorable spirit, and the Queen, on the 18th of November following, recommended

"to the consideration of Parliament the laws which regulate the navigation of the United Kingdom, with a view to ascertain whether any changes can be adopted, which, without danger to our maritime strength, may promote the commercial and colonial interests of the empire."

The extragavant and confident tone of Mr. Bancroft found no place in the royal message to Parliament.

The Washington *Union*, the organ of the administration, in anticipation of such repeal, and the consequent measures of our Government, declared this to be "the greatest stride ever taken by free trade." It was owing mainly to the free-trade policy of Polk's administration, and of the administration of Pierce, that the "Encyclopædia Britannica" asserted in the edition of 1860 that our policy of protection as to manufactures "had been invaded and abandoned."

In June, 1849, the British navigation laws were repealed, and the vessels of all nations with their productions, or with foreign productions, were admitted to her ports on the same terms as British vessels (she retaining exclusively her coasting trade), and in October following (1849) our Government, as proposed by Mr. Bancroft, notified the British Government that her vessels were entitled to like privileges in American ports, our coasting trade also being reserved.

Congress, on the 3d of March, 1815, had enacted that the vessels of all nations might by Presidential proclamation be admitted to our ports with their respective productions on like terms with American vessels, if the like privilege with respect to their ports was given to our vessels. This act was extended, on the 24th of May, 1828, so as to embrace cargoes wherever produced, provided the privilege was reciprocated; and authorized the President to give notice of such reciprocity.

These acts of 1815 and 1828 were passed at times when our successes in the ocean carrying trade were fettered more or less seriously by the restrictive policy of Great Britain, and especially by acts of Parliament or orders of the British Council forbidding all trade with most of her numerous colonial ports. This will presently be considered.

In the passage of the above two acts by us, and in the

movement of Mr. Polk's administration, there was a failure to consider that our success in navigation was due to circumstances not likely to be permanent; or to consider the important change then in progress—favorable to Great Britain—in the material and propulsion of steamers; or to consider the great disparity which existed between us and them as to the capital and manufacturing power which would be wielded by her in the competition on free-trade principles thus challenged by our Government.

It was especially dangerous, as Great Britain, from her sea-girt position, narrow boundaries, and large and distant colonial possessions, was naturally and necessarily nautical; while we, having a large territory at home to improve, develop, and provide with manufactures, could not, whenever these objects should receive due attention, for a long time hope to be nautical, on a scale necessary for successful competition with her in navigation.

This mistaken policy, and the change soon after made from wood to iron in the construction of steamers, have aided, as has no other cause, to build up the mercantile marine of Great Britain. Her steam lines to ports in this country have been and still are mines of wealth. She now enjoys the advantage of commanding the ocean trade of the world, and of a navy that enables her to defy all nations. We have been driven from the seas, except our coasting trade, which we retain by reason of asserting in its support the policy of "protection" instead of "free trade," and excepting our trade from Pacific ports.

At the time of Mr. Bancroft's free-trade proposal to Great Britain, events were occurring there which should have called for the close attention of the American people and Government—events relating to the control of the ocean traffic. Had these events been duly appreciated, a different policy, suggested by them, would have been pursued.

The adoption of iron for the hull of vessels and of the screw as a means of propulsion, were then engaging great attention in England, on the ground of the superiority of iron over wood and of the screw over paddle-wheels, and it was asserted and believed by the scientific men engaged in

steamer construction that a revolution in ocean navigation would result from their use. This revolution soon came.

Mr. Lindsay, in the celebrated work of his already mentioned, thus refers to it: "A very large amount of capital had been invested in these famous ships" [clippers for our California trade, some of which were employed in the trade with Europe], "but even these, before the close of 1854, were becoming unremunerative, owing to the competition of British iron screw steamers, . . . the main weapon whereby we bade defiance to the competition of all other nations in the general ocean race, then just commenced. As these splendid iron ships [he continues] commanded all the passenger traffic, and at the same time secured the preference by shippers of high-classed and valuable goods, which could afford to pay the heaviest rates of freight, many of the American clippers were obliged to seek employment elsewhere."

Commercial nations had early and abundant notice of the preparation in England, through a series of years, for this ocean race of 1854.

In the year 1837 (thirteen years before the running of our Collins' line of transatlantic steamers) John Ericsson, a Swede, then in London, caused a small steamer to be built, named the Francis B. Ogden, to the engine of which he applied a screw patented by him. Captain Robert F. Stockton, of New Jersey, then of the United States Navy, made an excursion in the steamer, and immediately gave Ericsson an order for the construction of one thus propelled, seventy feet in length, ten feet wide, and to draw six or seven feet of water. She reached New York, under sail, in 1839, after which she became a steam-tug in New Jersey, under the name of that State. She performed long and valuable services, especially in winter months, when, owing to ice, paddle-wheels could not be used.

The object of Captain Stockton in having this screw steamer built and sent to the United States was that the Government and all interested in the construction of ocean steamers might from personal observation see the importance of supplanting the paddle-wheel by the screw in both

naval and merchant ocean steamers. Ericsson, who arrived in the United States about the time of his steamer, strongly seconded these views, and he with others urged the construction of iron screw ships. While the Merrimac was being prepared by the Confederates to destroy our wooden fleet in Hampton Roads, Ericsson planned and built the Monitor; a service which enabled us to defeat the Merrimac—an inestimable service to the United States.

The Merrimac, a steamer of 3200 tons burden, was built by our navy before the war, and was scuttled and sunk at the Gosport Navy-Yard to save her from Confederate use. She was, however, raised and converted by them into an iron-clad with the most improved armor, 4½ inches thick, up to that time adopted by France and England. Her armament consisted of eight 8-inch and 9-inch Dahlgrens and two 7½-inch rifle guns. Her sides and roof were sloping as well as iron-plated, and her bow was formed so that she could be used as a ram.

Our navy consisted wholly of wooden vessels; and all of them together were incapable of withstanding the power of the iron-clad Merrimac. There was no navy-yard in the United States in which an iron-clad of proper dimensions could have been built, even if there had been time before the Merrimac could be completed. How to meet the Merrimac was the question which at Washington rose far above all others. In this emergency, Ericsson's plan of a monitor, which had no counterpart in naval construction anywhere, and seemed to violate all previously existing views, was laid before Secretary Welles by Mr. C. S. Bushnell, of New Haven, and was approved. A contract with Ericsson for her construction in one hundred days was then made, and she was launched in time, on the 30th of January, 1862, at Greenpoint, on the East River, at the shipyard of Thos. F. Rowland. All haste was made to prepare the craft for action, and she arrived at Hampton Roads on the evening of the 8th of March, 1862. On the morning of that day the Merrimac, which had been pushed to completion, steamed out of Norfolk and destroyed two of our vessels—the Congress of 50 guns, and the Cumberland of 24. The

Minnesota and Roanoke, which were aground out of reach, could not be encountered owing to low water, and the Merrimac steamed to a harbor near by, expecting to complete her work of easy destruction in the morning.

Early on the morning of the 9th she confidently approached the Minnesota, but Captain Worden of the Monitor placed his little craft between them and drew the fire upon her. She at first excited only curiosity and ridicule on board the huge Merrimac, but after a battle of four hours in which the Monitor was but little harmed, the Merrimac withdrew, seriously damaged. She did not again appear in the combat, and was afterward blown up to prevent capture. The guns of the Monitor were two 11-inch Dahlgrens, throwing shot of 166 pounds.

The naval battle on the 8th, between the Merrimac and our wooden vessels, the Congress and the Cumberland, which she easily overpowered, and the battle on the ensuing morning between the Merrimac and the Monitor, in which the Merrimac was overpowered, announced to the world that wooden ships, of which navies then were almost exclusively composed, were unable to cope with iron-clads, and that the only iron-clads then in existence could not cope with the Monitor in our harbors. We proceeded immediately to construct a sufficient number of others for purposes of offence as well as defence—should foreign nations intervene—and increased the armament of some of them from 11-inch to 15-inch guns, and their shot from 166 to 440 pounds. These guns were of cast iron. Steel ones are now used.

Those nations which had not forgotten our naval achievements of the war of 1812 found in the new and startling battle between the Merrimac (her true name was the Virginia) and the Monitor, that although in peace we had grossly neglected to prepare for war, yet when the emergency came we displayed unsurpassed invention and energy.

In the third volume of Sir Thomas Brassey's work on the English navy, he says: "The sensation produced by this battle, and the influence it exerted on the construction of ships of war, was enormous. . . . All the naval pow-

ers set to work energetically to convert their ships into iron-clads, and a struggle was commenced between guns and armor, in which all the resources of technical science were enlisted, and both the art of shipbuilding and the construction of guns were brought to an unprecedented degree of perfection."

He also admits (vol. ii. p. 128) that those vessels of the Monitor type "were far more formidable than any armored vessels which could be found in European waters."

This state of opinion in Europe at the time was of great service to our cause. In January preceding the battle, France, England, and Spain had moved forces into Mexico, which we viewed with great apprehension, as indicating an intent to intervene; but in May succeeding the battle, England and Spain withdrew their forces, on the alleged ground that their objects could be accomplished by negotiation with Mexico; this left only the army of Louis Napoleon.

But as England allowed the Alabama (which at the time of the battle was being built on the Mersey) to escape when completed, in July, 1862, to prey upon our commerce, and allowed her island ports opposite to our coast to be used not only for storing military supplies to the Confederacy, but as safe harbors for the blockade-runners who were to take them in, the wish to intervene had not at that period been entirely abandoned.

The distinguishing features of the Monitor were:

1. That her hull being submerged, except a strip the length of the vessel and one foot high, offered a target perceptible only at short range; and being armored, it was practically shot-proof against any projectiles at the time in use here.

2. Her turret, rising nine feet high above the deck and twenty in diameter, being plated with eight thicknesses of one-inch iron, was shot-proof against any projectiles in use.

3. Her two guns in it over the keel were heavier than any which could be worked as broadside guns on vessels of much greater tonnage.

4. They, being in a revolving turret, and side by side, could be pointed together or separately in any direction, whatever the course of the vessel.

5. Her turret being circular and armored, shot would glance or not penetrate.

The sum of $235,000 of the amount necessary to build the Monitor was advanced by John A. Griswold, C. S. Bushnell, and John F. Winslow. The extensive iron works at Troy of Mr. Griswold and his copartners were used to furnish materials for the structure. To them, and especially to Mr. Griswold, great honor is due for their zeal in aiding to get the Monitor ready in time, and for their earnest patriotism. A plan of a turreted war-vessel, involving the principle of the Monitor, had been patented by a Mr. Timby, of this country, long previously. But the success of the Monitor immortalized Mr. Ericsson.

We were saved in this great crisis, not by any wise policy of our government in naval affairs, but by the skill and patriotism of a few private citizens. Our escape from frightful defeat and destruction was truly wonderful. Shall we never provide in time for such contingencies? Our cities along the coast, without exception, are so built—wooden houses inside of brick or stone structures—that hundreds of acres of buildings could be destroyed by the shells of a single ship. The question of their safety, therefore, is one which should be carefully considered by the American people.

In 1841, two years after Ericsson arrived here, the Princeton, a war-steamer propelled by a screw planned by Ericsson, was built by our Government. The British Admiralty, although witnesses of the experiment of the Francis B. Ogden, had not then adopted this mode of propulsion for their vessels.

"This boat," says the Encyclopædia Britannica (referring to the Francis B. Ogden), "was perfectly successful, but the Board of Admiralty still failed to recognize the peculiar applicability of this means of propulsion [the screw] for vessels of war." It was this hesitation and the quick perception of Commodore Stockton which gave us Ericsson and the Monitor.

As an auxiliary power to sails, the propeller was used in 1845 in the steamer Massachusetts, built by R. B. Forbes.

She was the first American steamer of that sort to cross to Liverpool. We continued to build a few wooden vessels of war driven by the screw, so that in 1861, when the war of the Rebellion broke out, of the 43 vessels owned by the Government, 26 of them were thus propelled. There was not a single iron-clad or iron steamer among them; and what wooden vessels we had were, with a single important exception, on distant stations and not within reach by the then new administration of Mr. Lincoln. They had been previously distributed abroad, doubtless with the view of enabling the then intended Confederacy to obtain a firm footing before it could be disturbed by a blockade of their ports. Had there been at home an efficient navy, the Rebellion might have been crushed in the egg. During the war we were compelled to add largely to the number of our naval vessels by purchase from our merchant marine, at high rates; and by construction out of unseasoned timber. The number, on the 4th of July, 1861, had been increased from 43 to 82; in December, 1861, to 264; in December, 1862, to 427; in December, 1863, to 588; and in December, 1864, to 671. The purchase, change of form, repair, construction, and manning of these vessels—the latter through large bounties—made our outlay during the war probably double what it would have been had the navy at the outset been efficient.

Although the British Admiralty were not the first in adopting the propeller in place of paddle-wheels, they displayed much greater activity afterward.

"In 1840, after the Francis B. Ogden had left their waters, Mr. F. P. Smith, having obtained the support of some influential mercantile men, brought out the Archimedes, a screw vessel of 232 tons, and 80-horse power. The success of this vessel was so complete that the Admiralty were at length induced to make a trial of the screw in the Royal Navy, and the Rattler was ordered to be built." . . . "The Rattler was now tried, and her trials having fully satisfied the Board of Admiralty, they ordered the construction of several screw vessels. The screw had meantime advanced rapidly into favor as an auxiliary power for fast-sailing vessels in the

merchant service, and more recently [says this article, Ency. Brit. edition of 1860] it has been extensively employed for full-powered steamers of the very largest class, by several of our great mail-packet companies, the Peninsular and Oriental Company taking the lead." The merchant service of Great Britain had in 1859, 64 iron steamers then running, but only 34 of them screws. Their Government was more rapid. Of the 463 vessels of all descriptions, of which her navy was composed in 1859, 312 were propelled by the screw; 112 by paddle-wheels; and 32 were then in process of conversion or construction. But only one of these was iron or iron-clad. It required the lesson taught by the Monitor to produce iron-clads; and their construction was commenced with great activity.

Immediately before the termination of our war, we also, not satisfied with having merely iron monitors, began to build iron-plated frigates, but the war terminated before they were completed, with perhaps one or two exceptions. Improvements in steamers made them undesirable, and they have never been finished. The quantity of trash on hand at the close of the war was the reason assigned for omitting to construct efficient war vessels. A few were, however, constructed. Mr. Webb, one of the members of this club, was engaged in building the Dunderberg, a fast and powerful iron-clad, but when finished she was sold to France.

In 1855 the Cunard line, which had been running to the United States since 1840, built the Persia, their first iron ship. In 1862 they built the China, their third iron ship, and for the first time, influenced by the action and advice of the British Government, used the screw instead of paddle-wheels. Fifteen steamers of the line were then paddle-wheelers. All built since the China have been iron screw-steamers.

Their adoption by the Peninsular and Oriental, and subsequently by the Cunard Company, led to their use in Great Britain for nearly all sea-going purposes.

Indeed it may be said that for ocean navigation by both mercantile and naval ships, iron or steel steamers propelled

by the screw have been generally substituted by commercial nations in Europe for sailing vessels constructed of wood and for wooden or iron steamers with side-wheels, and that a complete revolution in this respect has been accomplished.

The Cunard Company consisted of Samuel Cunard, John Burns, and — MacIver. It started, in 1840, a line from Liverpool to Halifax and Boston, under an agreement, previously made with the British Postmaster-General, to build four steamers—the Britannia, Arcadia, Caledonia, and Columbia. They were to carry the mails and make a certain number of voyages per month. For this they were to receive a subsidy of $400,000 per annum. They were to carry naval officers. But afterward they were relieved of this duty and the subsidy was reduced to $350,000 per annum. Later, instead of running via Halifax to Boston, they made alternate voyages to Boston and New York. But finally New York became the sole terminus.

This company in 1843 added the Hibernia, and from that time to this have been enlarging and improving their line. It has run, it is claimed, without the loss of a passenger, or even a letter. Under Government aid, the English have also established numerous other lines. Indeed, the policy of granting subsidies has been pursued by the British Government until her subjects now hold more steamers than can profitably be used, and England is suffering from their over-production.

France and Germany are following in the footsteps of England.

In March, 1846, a parallel movement with the Cunard steamers began in this country. E. K. Collins and his associates proposed to the Postmaster-General to construct a line of steamers to run between New York and Liverpool, if they could be employed to carry the mail. In March, 1847, an act was passed by Congress authorizing the Secretary of the Navy to accept the proposal; which was to build five steamers, and the company was to be paid a certain sum for each of twenty voyages per annum. The act provided that they should be built under the inspection of a naval constructor in the employ of the Navy Department,

and so as to be convertible, at the least possible cost, into war steamers of the first class.

The company commenced the construction of four of the steamers—the Arctic, the Baltic, the Atlantic, and Pacific —but as the cost exceeded the estimates, they received an advance from the Government, were relieved from the obligation to build the fifth steamer, and the subsidy was increased to $33,000 per voyage. The vessels were completed, and commenced running in 1850. The largest annual sum appropriated by Congress for this service was $858,000, in 1853. They were to carry, without cost to the Government, four passed-midshipmen as watch officers and an agent of the Post-Office Department. They were built of wood, and with paddle-wheels.

If the views with respect to the superiority of iron for the hull of steamers and the screw for propulsion, which were having practical effect in Great Britain, had made equal progress in this country, the Collins line might not have passed out of existence. The ocean contest, according to Lindsay, commenced in 1854, between vessels of iron and those of wood; and it is unfortunate that we were in no manner prepared for it. The Arctic, the Baltic, the Atlantic, and Pacific were supposed to be the finest specimens of wood architecture then afloat, and excelled the Cunarders in speed.

In 1854 the Arctic, of the Collins line, having on board a large number of passengers, in a fog off Cape Race, collided with the Vesta, was sunk with most of her passengers and crew, among them the wife and a son and daughter of Mr. Collins. This, as it caused doubts of the safety of their steamers, was a serious blow to the line. The Pacific, another of their steamers, left Liverpool in 1856, fortunately with but few passengers, and was never heard from. The Adriatic was built in the same manner, to take the place of the vessels lost. But in 1858 the Collins line, by reason of enormous losses, was discontinued.

On the discontinuance of this line, efforts were made to resuscitate it, or to construct another aided by Government, but jealousies having been awakened in rival cities,

and among Western and Southern politicians, against what was regarded as favoritism to New York, and the experiment first made having been disastrous, subsidies for this purpose were refused, and the line was not renewed. Soon the Government refused to grant aid to any ocean steamers.

High speed in a fog or among icebergs on the part of a steamer built of wood and with side-wheels is a great imprudence. Even with an iron screw steamer, double-plated and built in compartments, it is dangerous.

The failure of the Collins line might not have occurred if its steamers had been constructed of iron and in compartments, and propelled by the screw. True, the Cunard Company, as late as 1852, completed the Arabia, of wood, but they were then arranging for the construction of iron steamers, and the Persia, built of iron, made her first voyage in 1855. It was not, however, until 1862 that the Cunarders made use of the propeller.

The aim of the Collins Company was most laudable. It was to overcome the competition of Great Britain in her efforts to command the whole carrying trade of the United States, then asserted through the Cunard Company, the creation and much of the sustenance of which, in its early stages, came from the British Government. The failure of the Collins line will ever be considered a great public misfortune.

It is unnecessary for the British any longer to continue subsidies for lines already established in excess of the wants of commerce. It is only to lines not profitable, which for political or commercial reasons need to be maintained, that they now grant subsidies. France and Germany, not having reached this excess, continue their efforts without diminution to extend their mercantile marine, and as a consequence their navy. France locates navy-yards at places convenient for commercial purposes, and in addition to subsidies for construction as well as use, permits her navy-yards to be used to some extent in the construction and repair of commercial vessels.

But the inferiority of all countries to Great Britain in

the means for building vessels of iron or steel is marked and extraordinary. All along the British coast shipyards are located at convenient points, provided with all the means of construction, on a scale not reached elsewhere. The following, either condensed or copied from the last edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" (1883), as to the most important of those yards—those at Glasgow in Scotland—shows the magnitude of the competition which Mr. Polk's administration, through Mr. Bancroft, was so instrumental in establishing:

"Glasgow, of the cities of Great Britain, is next to London in population. It is on the Clyde, about twenty miles above its mouth, in the midst of a great coal-field and of beds of iron.

"The American Civil War paralyzed the cotton manufactures of Glasgow, as it did those of Lancashire, but otherwise it did little harm, and the stimulus that was given to shipbuilding by the carrying trade of the world practically falling into British hands more than compensated for other losses" (vol. x. p. 641).

"Shipbuilding is the greatest of all the modern industries of Glasgow, and the position attained by the shipbuilders of the Clyde is a matter of imperial consequence and national pride" (p. 646).

"The shipyards extend from the mouth of the river to a considerable distance above Glasgow; they are thirty-five in number, and produce nearly one half of all the vessels built in Great Britain. They are chiefly of iron and steel, the latter having recently been introduced with great success.

"The shipbuilding trade in Glasgow owes its extraordinary expansion entirely to the rapid supplanting of wood by iron as a building material. Twenty years ago, in 1859, the tonnage launched reached only 35,709 tons, from which amount in rapid strides it reached in 1863 a total of 123,362, and in 1874 a maximum amount of 262,430 was floated off." This includes navy, mail, and passenger ocean steamers.

"The fact, however, that the town is actually built within the richest coal and ironstone field in Scotland has had, of

all causes, the most important influence in determining the current and prosperity of local industries. Further, the river Clyde, rendered navigable for vessels of the largest tonnage, flowing through the centre of that great coal and iron region, presents incomparable facilities for the prosecution of shipbuilding and mine engineering. But beyond the advantages of natural position and mineral wealth, it is right to say that Glasgow owes much of her industrial prestige to a long line of highly gifted, ingenious, sagacious, and energetic citizens, whose influence has not only been stamped on local industries, but has been felt and acknowledged throughout the entire world "(p. 615).

"The production of pig iron annually is about from 900,000 to 1,000,000 tons. With abundance of iron and coal, and great facilities for both land and water carriage, mechanical engineering is carried on with peculiar energy and success."

"The marine engineering works of the Clyde, which in many instances are worked in direct connection with shipbuilding yards, are equipped on a scale worthy of the great industry of which they form an important part, and few establishments exist in any other quarter capable of producing the enormous forgings for propeller shafts, etc., of ocean steamers, which form a regular item in the undertakings of Glasgow engineering firms" (p. 646).

Previously to the construction of ships of iron on the scale which the Cunard Company occasioned, we had lost a portion of our ocean supremacy in sailing vessels. Many now on the stage well remember the wonderful achievements of our great clipper ships in the trade, not only between China and the United States, but also between China and England. In speed and safety they for a time were unequalled, and were a source of national pride, but the English, mortified by defeat, built clippers of equal, and they claim, greater speed, and of such superior construction that they delivered their cargoes of tea without the damage often sustained in American clippers. They thus established a reputation for safety which restored the trade between China and Liverpool and London to the English. But

although this had a damaging effect upon us, it was through their construction of ships of iron propelled by the screw that English supremacy was established.

Our mercantile iron and screw steamers, built chiefly for our coasting and Pacific trade, do not exceed 200. They come from private yards on the Delaware, and all have been built since 1872. This is a smaller number than Great Britain builds in one year. To John Roach the creation of this industry in the United States is largely due. He has thus rendered a service of great importance to the country. These 200 vessels would constitute our chief reliance in case of war.

Although the British Admiralty was slow to adopt either iron for the hull or the screw for propulsion, yet when the public mind had become convinced of the superiority of both, the new industry in all the shipyards of the kingdom was looked upon as of national importance and received government favor in every direction. Schools were opened for instruction, aspirants for the navy and youths in the service, were sent to the yards and trained in and familiarized with all the processes of construction; and those great minds at Glasgow, famous already in planning and constructing steamers of the former kind, now bent their whole energies to the changed industry, which was to eclipse America, and place England far in advance of all commercial nations.

In describing the power of England, Mr. Webster pointed to her "possessions and military posts dotted over the surface of the whole globe." Now, it is not these. It is her shipyards, her places of manufacture, her machinery, her capital, her command of the ocean for trade or for war, that are referred to as the proofs of her strength.

Those shipyards enable her to turn out 750,000 tons of new vessels annually, over and above what may be built at the Government yards. That machinery is estimated "to give to her population twenty times the strength which it derives from numbers," and is equivalent to six hundred million man power (Johnson's Encyclopædia, vol. 2, p. 100). Her capital invested in outside securities is estimated at from one thousand millions to one thousand five hundred

millions of pounds sterling (see art. on "Commerce" in the "Encyclopædia Britannica").

Her command of the ocean enables her to penetrate all ports which have supplies, and to accumulate those supplies at the great centres of trade (London and Liverpool), and aid with her capital and extensive dealings in fixing the price of all the great commodities of the world wherever produced, of cotton and wool, wheat and corn, steel and iron, and gold and silver. These find there "a common level of value." (As to wheat and corn, see Encyclopædia Britannica, last edition, vol. 6, p. 417.)

The Bank of England always aids these great objects in arranging the rates of interest.

The advantage which we formerly possessed in the building of vessels has now been transferred to Great Britain,* because—

1st. She was early in the field with iron ships and the screw, and we were late in appreciating their value and use.

2d. She has the materials of construction in hand at lower prices than ours, and possesses facilities for it, in her shipyards and in her cheap labor, unequalled by any nation.

3d. Her policy as well as that of all highly commercial countries abroad has been one of great encouragement to shipbuilders and owners. To these, large subsidies have been granted and liberal payments made for many years for carrying the mail; while Congress has refused to grant such subsidies (except temporarily), or to make such payments, or to give such encouragement.

4th. The Alabama, during the war of the Rebellion, roamed the seas unmolested from the summer of 1862 until June, 1864, when she was sunk by the Kearsarge, a steamer

* The tonnage of American shipping, with cargoes and in ballast, entered and cleared in the United States, in 1860, before the war, was, in tons. 12,087,209
In 1870 it had fallen to..... 6,992,967
British tonnage of like description, entered and cleared in the United Kingdom was, in 1860, tons..... 12,314,923
In 1870 it had reached..... 25,072,180
In 1880 it had reached (an unparalleled growth)..... 41,348,984

built by our navy during the war. She gave a fatal blow to our commerce, not only by destroying numerous vessels, but especially by causing among shipowners widespread apprehensions, arising in great part from the belief that Great Britain, in one of whose shipyards she was built, manned, and partly armed, would allow others to be built and to escape. While the Sumter and the Alabama were at their destructive work, important shipowners applied to President Lincoln to protect our ocean commerce. But, owing to the neglect of previous administrations to provide a sufficient navy, and to the necessity for using the few ships we had in the blockade of Southern ports, protection was at the time impossible. We had to wait for the construction of cruisers of the class of the Kearsarge. Our merchant vessels were therefore sold to the Government and to strangers, and our private shipyards closed and devoted to other pursuits.* Captain Colcomb, a distinguished naval officer of Great Britain, in a discussion before the Royal United Service Institution, thus stated the cause of our enormous national loss, "*The American commerce, as we all know, entirely disappeared from the seas, simply because she was not prepared for a naval war.*"

5th. The money and activity of enterprising citizens in the United States have been turned by these and other causes from the construction and running of ocean vessels to more profitable uses for capital on land, viz., to agriculture, to manufactures, and to internal improvements and development, especially in railroads.

The question arises on these facts, What should be done by the United States to restore our navigation to the footing necessary for safety?

* During the Rebellion we transferred to the British flag, alone, 715 vessels whose tonnage was 480,482. Over 175 were destroyed by the confederate cruisers. "History of the Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe," vol. ii., p. 185. Capt. J. D. Bullock, at p. 214, says: "The consequences of putting off the preparation for war until hostilities are imminent, were so clearly demonstrated by the events of '61–'65, that no statesmen who have given due attention to the progress and the result of the Ameriaan civil war, will be inclined *to run the risk of a great future peril for the sake of a present show of economy.*"

I. Shall we buy foreign-built ships, mercantile or naval?

1. The art of building vessels is necessary to the prosperity and safety of the whole country.

The construction of a first-class merchant steamer of to-day calls into exercise a variety of avocations. The work is done at different places :—

The hull at the shipyards and of iron or steel, generally made elsewhere; the engines, boilers, furnaces, and the propellers at the machine-shops; the anchors at foundries; the standing rigging at the wire mills; the running rigging and sails at the sail-lofts; the instruments for observations, the machinery for pumping, for converting salt water into fresh, for electric lights, for heating, for hoisting, for cooking, for ventilation—by experts in these different callings; the furniture and decoration of cabins—demanded by modern taste and extravagance—by various workmen and artists. Many other kinds of artisans, as miners of coal and iron, are employed.

In planning the engines, boilers, and furnaces, it is of national importance to secure the greatest economy in fuel consistent with the largest production of force. If this is not done, distant ports cannot be reached by steam except with a quantity of coal on board disproportioned to the room allowed for cargo. Competing steamers of lower consumption and equal power would drive the others from the trade. This single instance shows what a difficult problem is presented to those who are to build steamers with which to-day success is possible. It suggests the difficulties attending the purchase of foreign ships. They would put off upon us their poorest steamers, not their best ones.

To many observers these wonderful machines, which when well constructed traverse the ocean with the precision of a railroad train on land, are the same now that they were a little while ago; but the steamer of to-day with the latest improvements supersedes the steamer without them, as the clipper superseded the ordinary sailing vessel in the China trade; or as the iron and screw steamer superseded the wooden paddle-wheel steamer in ocean traffic; or as the

steamer with compound engines supersedes those with the single engine, as inefficient and too large a consumer of coal.

This process of constant supercession of the inferior vessels by the superior is especially marked in navies. England up to 1858 relied for safety from attack on what she called her wooden walls. Her great achievements in naval battles were won with them. France, however, built the Gloire in 1859, protected with armor; and England, thus menaced, ordered the Warrior and the Black Prince, iron-clads, each superior to the Gloire. The Warrior, plated with 4½-inch armor and of the burden of 6100 tons, was finished first. It was with a sense of imperial pride that the nation pointed to this vessel. But both classes, the wooden and the thinly armored, and also the light armament in use—indeed the whole navy—were practically wiped out on the 9th of March, 1862, by our Monitor. Their wooden steamers were immediately converted into iron-clads. Other steamers were built more heavily armored and with lofty masts, but the length of the steamers (400 feet) made them unwieldy in action, and vessels 300 feet long were substituted. But these were then condemned, as the great weight of their masts, rigging, and sails made a sufficient weight of armor and armament impracticable.

Soon monitors without masts, armored with steel, of the "Devastation" type, were built. They have a central stationary citadel, containing the base of two revolving turrets, each of which has two guns. "By this great change [said the *London Times*] we [the English] were enabled to rise at a bound from 8 and 9 inch armor protection to 14-inch armor, and from 18-ton to 35-ton guns." Two of the steamers of this class have 38-ton guns.

This was followed by the construction of the Colossus and vessels of her type, to carry four guns of 43 tons. Four barbette steamers, each to carry four 60-ton guns and six of lower calibre, were also commenced. The Collingwood, a barbette steamer with 4-ton and 43-ton guns, was lately finished.

The greatest advance in English men-of-war was the

Inflexible, a vessel also with a central citadel and two revolving turrets. The citadel is protected in vital parts by 24-inch steel armor. Each of its two turrets carries two 80-ton guns.

The Duillio, a steamer of the Italian navy, was designed to carry 60-ton guns, but was finally altered for four 100-ton guns. They were made in England at the works of Sir W. Armstrong, and were ordered after it had been learned that the Inflexible, built for the Mediterranean, was to have 80-ton guns.

Mr. Barnby, Director of Naval Construction at the Admiralty in England, exhibits the true motive for such additions to weight. He says: "Had the manufacture of enormous ordnance been stopped when the 35-ton gun was introduced we might have been satisfied . . . . But English artillerists were ready to make guns of twice 35 tons, and foreign powers were known to be building ships to receive such guns. There could be no question that we could not allow foreign seamen to have guns afloat more powerful than our own."

These changes in armor from 8-inch to 24, and in armament from 166-pounders to 2000-pounders, have been made since the battle between the Monitor and the Merrimac, and were no doubt influenced by the visit of our monitor, the Miantonomah, to British waters. These steamers, the Devastation and the two of her type, the Colossus and the two of her type, the five barbette steamers, and the Inflexible, will constitute, when finished, the main naval reliance of Great Britain for heavy service. We have nothing to meet or repulse these vessels. They could leave England, and in one month lay in ashes the cities of most importance on our Atlantic seaboard. To protect ourselves against the possibility of such a disaster is our highest duty.

In each of these changes of construction, all the resources of the British Empire in mechanical skill and in scientific attainments were brought into activity to place the country in a position of entire safety.

These employments improve the skill of the people in mechanical arts, exalt their patriotism, and elevate them to

an understanding of the great questions to which they relate. The people of the United States would be equally benefited by the distribution of these employments over the country. We can neither build such steamers as those described above, of the mastless kind, nor make such guns as they carry.

If we were to announce ourselves as purchasers of ships of war, Great Britain would undoubtedly sell to us, as she already has to others, many of her naval steamers, but not the Alexandra, the Devastation, the Conqueror, or the Inflexible, each of which she pronounces impregnable. Of course we would not want her discarded and inferior vessels.

But suppose we could buy one of those named. Mr. Brassey states the cost of one up to 1882 at £600,000, or say $3,000,000. Is it not far better to build steamers for ourselves, as soon as we have the capacity, and thus distribute this sum here, and gain the instruction which it would afford?

Great Britain has a large surplus of merchant ocean steamers for sale. No other nation has. She would hope to sell only those which, for some reason not easily arrived at by the inexperienced, are unsuitable for any particular trade or for any trade. It may be said that the question whether a good or a bad vessel shall be purchased is one exclusively for the buyer; but it is a matter of general and public concern to exclude vessels which are inferior, and which, if purchased, may become necessary in naval conflicts.

In obtaining vessels from Great Britain, we, especially, would meet a strong antagonistic British feeling. Vessels contribute to national supremacy on the ocean, both mercantile and naval, and there exist antagonisms between us, which will ever breed animosities. We are looked upon as their ultimate competitors for the commerce of the world, and they would not be likely to sell us their best vessels.

1. Buying English steamers would involve the necessity for their repair abroad, which would be highly inconvenient and expensive.

2. Buying in Great Britain would build up English ship-

yards, English skill, and English manufactures with American capital, and prevent us from having these advantages.

3. Buying merchant vessels abroad would necessitate the purchase of naval vessels from those who may become our enemies, and make difficult if not impossible their repair in time of war. It would be a national disgrace to be obliged to send, even in time of peace, our naval steamers to England to be repaired.

4. We need at or near our shipyards the same class of cultivated and trained minds that in the experience of years has been concentrated at Glasgow; many of them rewarded with national honors. It is the duty of our government to promote such a growth and such an assemblage at convenient places here, as the British Government has there. This can never be accomplished if we do not use the diligence, devotion, and means of instruction which Great Britain used when she abandoned wooden vessels for those of iron, and the paddle-wheel for the propeller. Her best intellects were aroused and encouraged to compass this question, in all its bearings, local and international.

5. Mr. Brassey, at p. 83, vol. iv. of his valuable work, states that "the Cunard and other companies [these foreign vessels carry our mails and productions] would furnish a matchless fleet of the Alabama class, but capable of steaming at far higher rates of speed, and carrying coals for a much greater distance. The Germans [he continues] look to the lines of Atlantic mail steamers as a valuable reserve for the navy, and our immense resources in the same class of ships should be taken into account!"

It is to be hoped that we also will take it into account, when Congress undertakes to provide for our safety, and will in due time have a like reserve, to fall back upon in case of a foreign war.

The line of five British steel steamers of about 2000 tons each, built on the Clyde, to run in connection with the Canadian Pacific Railway, between ports on Georgian Bay and Lake Superior, *can be quickly provided with armament and used to destroy all our ports and commerce on the great Lakes.*

An English commission, in considering the space to be appropriated to coal in a class of powerful war steamers, stated the distance to be steamed from Portsmouth, the great depot of British naval power, to New York, to be 3075 miles; and arranged for a coal capacity to cover the distance and return!

6. Our prosperity and indeed our safety as a nation depend on reliance upon ourselves for whatever is necessary for support, for defence, or for war. In this view it is of the highest national importance that we should build our own mercantile and naval marine, and have the means at hand for repair or improvement, and under no circumstances permit the free purchase and registry of foreign-built vessels.

II. Shall foreign vessels be encouraged to transport our postal matter and our home productions?

If New York had no postal communication with a distant town, and Boston had, and diligently maintained it, trade would naturally follow postal facilities, and would leave New York and go to Boston. This all experience shows. English statesmen have urged upon the postal authorities the exercise of the greatest diligence in extending their postal service, irrespective of cost, to every point of importance, on the ground that trade ensues. The following extract from the article in the "Encyclopædia Britannica" on Steam Navigation (ed. 1860) shows the early and careful attention of Great Britain to this question:

"The question of the economy of fuel is of vital importance . . . as affecting *the maintenance and extension of some of our great postal lines of ocean steamers*, and it is now receiving a large share of attention, both from steamship owners and engineers."

If the U. S. mails are not carried under our own flag, private letters of great consequence, and Government letters containing state matters too important to be exhibited to the curious and communicative mail officials of foreign governments, would need to be sent by special messengers.

Even when written for the purpose of extending our trade abroad, it must appear now, to the party addressed, that we have no ocean mail vessels, and fail in the efficiency which makes trade with us desirable.

If we continue to give adequate protection to our home manufacturers, we shall soon be able to produce a surplus for export; as, for instance, cottons, boots and shoes, leather, agricultural implements, tools, clocks and watches, sewing-machines, locomotives and cars, iron and steel, and numerous articles of wood. We cannot advantageously build up a foreign trade in these productions if we export them in foreign vessels.

In sending our goods under a foreign flag to new markets, we expose our dealings to competitors who, by underselling for the moment, will ruin our ventures and keep the trade for themselves. The foreign shipmaster will always favor his own people. The argument that it is cheap to use foreign vessels is more than counterbalanced by such disadvantages; and also by what Brassey says might result in case of war—namely, that the Cunard and other companies "would furnish a matchless fleet of the Alabama class, but capable of steaming at far higher rates of speed, and carrying coals for a much greater distance." In our present arrangements for carrying our across-sea mails, we are providing the means for the ultimate destruction of our commerce.

III. Should we resort to subsidies?

If other commercial nations, to extend their mercantile marine, did not grant subsidies with a view to meet or to overpower foreign competition, and there existed a willingness among capitalists in the United States to build up a sufficient mercantile marine without public aids, the answer would be No! But as subsidies are liberally granted by the leading commercial powers—England, France, and Germany—and they accomplish the purpose of building up a mercantile marine sufficient to take the carrying trade of our own productions away from our people, and to devolve

it on them, and not only prevent the construction of ocean steamers by us for any but local purposes or the trade from our Pacific coast, but also deprive us of the nursery necessary to our navy, the answer would be Yes!

It is unnecessary to show the enormous amounts paid by foreign governments for this object. They have been effectual. Their ships flourish on all oceans; ours do not, and the failure on our part to have a merchant marine, except within the limits stated, amounts to a national misfortune.

Steamers were first employed in the postal service of Great Britain in 1821. In order to make the service effectual it was necessary for governments to aid in providing the steamers. It appears that the receipts in this service were much less than the outlay. A large annual loss to the Government accrued; "but public opinion soon determined that a system which promoted public prosperity and national defence was not for that reason to be abandoned."

As early as 1853 the English treasury committee thus refer to these grants: "The objects which appear to have led to the formation of these contracts, and to the large expenditure involved, were to afford a rapid, frequent, and punctual communication with those distant ports which feed the main arteries of British commerce, and with the most important of our foreign possessions; to foster maritime enterprise, and to encourage the production of a superior class of vessels which would promote the commerce and wealth of the country in time of peace, and assist in defending its shores against hostile aggression. These expectations have not been disappointed. The ocean has been traversed with a precision and regularity hitherto deemed impossible; commerce and civilization have been extended; the colonies have been brought more closely into connection with the home Government, and steamships have been constructed of a size and power that without Government aid could hardly—at least for many years—have been produced."

If we cannot have steamers of our own build we cannot have

an extensive foreign trade, or a sufficient and well-manned steam navy. Our capitalists will not build steamers for the general ocean trade under the disadvantages which now exist from foreign, and it may perhaps be said, hot-bed competition. If national policy requires steamers of our own build for the extension of ocean trade, national policy calls for the necessary means. These cannot be found except aided by subsidies or equivalent advantages.

IV. We must modify our navigation laws in favor of our own flag, whether subsidies are granted or refused.

Our shipping in the coasting trade is profitable to those engaged in it, and the business is conducted at rates of freight which are kept low by means of domestic competition. The steamers (iron and with the screw) are stanch, they insure the safety of passengers and freight, and are run with economy, regularity, and skill, and with great advantage to the country. Our success in this trade illustrates the beneficence of the policy which keeps America for the Americans. In this field of enterprise we do not encounter the power of British capital and cheap labor, as it is to foreigners a prohibited industry. They are utterly debarred from our coasting and internal navigation. In Lindsay's valuable history of merchant shipping and ancient commerce, it is stated that Mr. Bancroft, at an interview in 1847 with the British minister, just previous to the letter from him quoted above, in urging the repeal of their navigation laws, offered to give up our coasting trade to the English if they would give up theirs to us. Mr. Bancroft's language is thus given: "We are ready to do anything you like; if you can do but little, we must do little; if you can do much, we will do much; IF YOU SHALL DO ALL, WE SHALL DO ALL." *

The bill for the repeal of English navigation laws, prepared after this conversation, contained a clause opening their coasting trade, and Lord Palmerston during its progress in Parliament insisted that "Mr. Bancroft's pledges"

* Printed by Lindsay in capitals.

would be fully borne out by our Government. But when Mr. Buchanan's letter on the subject of the navigation laws appeared (he was then Secretary of State), declaring what the United States would do in the event of such repeal by the English, this sentence appeared : " *The coasting trade* (meaning ours) *is of course reserved.*" The clause of the English bill giving to all nations the privilege of their coasting trade was then indignantly stricken out, and Mr. Bancroft was violently criticised. What precisely was meant by Mr. Bancroft in that conversation does not appear. The English interpretation of it is not supported by his letter. What he was supposed to have promised—our coasting trade —is the great boon for which the English are striving. Mr. Lindsay says (vol. iii. p. 559) that " while the sun never sets on the dominions of our Queen, there is no ocean, no sea, and I might add, were it not for the exclusive policy of the United States and of France, with a few other insignificant exceptions, no lake, no river, where the British flag is not unfurled." Some years afterward the coasting trade of Great Britain was thrown open, in the hope of stimulating us to do likewise, but the British flag will never be unfurled throughout the rivers and lakes of the United States, unless those who favor "free trade" shall become once more invested with power.

With all the instrumentalities we can employ, of individual skill and governmental aid, it will be extremely difficult to secure immediately a just portion of the ocean carrying trade. Other nations occupy the field, aided by vastly more capital than we can use, and by pecuniary interests in that direction more pressing than any we can have while our country offers such great inducements to those engaged in its internal development and industries and in domestic transportation. But this development is so largely accomplished that we can now turn our energies and capital with greater advantage than ever before, since steam and iron superseded sail and wood, to ocean navigation. It will take years of experience and the intelligent expenditure of large capital to give us the necessary skill to construct steamers equal to the best of the English, either

mercantile or naval. It has taken forty years to bring the English lines between Liverpool and New York to the wonderful state of perfection which now exists. Speed, safety, large carrying power in freight and passengers, economy in cost and in fuel and running expenses, are subjects to which the astute minds of the assemblage of intellects at Glasgow and other shipyards are incessantly directed. If a steamer intended for competitive trade is found to fail in any respect (and such failures are frequent), she is placed on lines of less importance, or sold to outsiders, if such can be found to buy her. The lines now run by us do not call for the highest qualities in vessels, and we are not yet ready to produce them.

We must build up by degrees, availing ourselves as far as possible of the locked-up experience of Great Britain. We can, however, begin by improving and establishing shipyards, and providing them with all the new appliances found necessary in British yards to construct first-class steamers of iron and steel and the best patterns of screws and machinery. Our naval school at Annapolis should be revised, enlarged, and improved until it shall give a thorough training in all the arts and sciences required in iron and steel shipbuilding to a sufficient number of young men to provide not only Government works, but private establishments with skilled minds, competent to solve all the problems theoretically and practically involved in designing and constructing every part of the highest type of iron and steel steamships, naval and commercial. These young men, on graduation, should be placed in public and private yards and works, and in public and private steamers, to perfect themselves in the successful application of what is taught them at the great Government school. This would make that school a most efficient and serviceable factor in restoring to our flag, and in retaining a fair share of ocean trade and commerce.

Our Government is sending to England, to the great works the British Government has fostered, for steel plates for a war-vessel. Our steel industry on a large scale is only ten years old, and we cannot yet produce plates of a sufficiently

high test. Till we do do it an efficient iron-clad navy is impossible, for our rivals may at any time cut off our supply of steel plates.

We should also provide for making guns and armor of the heaviest kind and of the best pattern and of the strongest metal. If we had the vessels we could not now, ourselves, arm them; for we have to send to England or Germany for steel castings for guns of over six-inch bore, and eighteen-inch may be required. Our best seacoast guns are harmless against such iron-clad ships as European nations could send into our Atlantic ports in two weeks. The commonest prudence and safety should lead our Government to establish and perfect works, and train up skilled artisans, at some well-located yard, till it can produce at least as heavy and effective ordnance as any other nation.

In the mean time we should provide abundant means for the defence of all our harbors, as monitors, torpedoes, and fortifications for these guns as soon as we can make them.

What we most want, next to the defence of our harbors, are lines of steamers, like those which cross the Atlantic, capable of conversion into aids to our navy in case of necessity, as transports and fast light-armed men of war to meet those of the "Alabama class," made from foreign merchant steamers.

The policy of buying abroad foreign-built ships, mercantile and naval, and the supplies necessary for making guns and armor, will, to the extent of the purchase, delay the time for creating and perfecting industries at home essential to public safety. Instead of encouraging here "the production of a superior class of vessels," it will discourage it. Instead of "fostering maritime enterprise" in the United States, it will foster that of Great Britain, *and be in exact accord with what she would prescribe for us and for all other nations than herself.* It would condemn our country in an emergency like that of 1861, to reliance on the possibility of finding private aid in another Erricsson and another Griswold; a scheme of vast danger in view of the enormous strides of foreign navies; and not creditable to a nation which has passed its hundredth anniversary.

We shall need, however, something more than skill and governmental aid in the shape of subsidies. This infant industry must at first be steadily encouraged by protective duties or bounties, as other nations have encouraged theirs, so as to bestow advantages on American vessels over foreign, in at least the carriage of our own productions. Foreign vessels (except as to our coasting trade) are admitted to our ports on like terms with our own, and they carry what we sell and what we buy abroad. Against this, in order to get started, our steamers will need protection, the extent of such protection to be determined from time to time, as it may be found necessary, so as to build up a sufficient mercantile marine to transact the business of the nation, to supply ships in case of war, and to form a prolific nursery for our future navy.

The example of Great Britain in this respect is worthy of consideration. Her famous Navigation Act, which was enacted in 1651, during Cromwell's time, though occasionally relaxed by special treaties or acts of Parliament, remained in full force in its essential provisions until 1849, say two centuries. It provided that the products of Asia, Africa, and America should be imported into Great Britain or its possessions only in British-built ships, owned by British subjects, the master and three fourths of the crew to be such subjects. This provision did not apply to the productions of Europe, as to which it was provided that they should not be imported into Great Britain except in such ships of her own, "or in such ships as were the real property of the people of the country or place in which the goods were produced, or from which they could only be or most usually were exported." Holland, which was a mere receiver and distributor of such productions, was the chief competitor of Great Britain in the carrying trade of the world. "By this act (says Lindsay) the Dutch received a very serious blow."

In Adam Smith's free trade "Wealth of Nations," and long before, this was admitted to be "the maritime charter of England." It was so considered until it was deemed politic to attack the principle of all measures of "protec-

tion," in order to influence the United States to abandon her protective policy with respect to manufactures. The English have "a happy facility of disposition" when this object is to be accomplished.

The Dutch, finding that their maritime supremacy would be destroyed by the British Navigation Act, went to war with England; and later, in 1666, a coalition was formed between the French and the Dutch, but England finally prevailed. Amsterdam lost her supremacy, and it was transferred to London, which has ever since been the "chief emporium of the commercial world."

Soon after the adoption of our National Constitution, Congress, in view of the effect upon our shipping interests of the British act of 1651 and its amendments, passed various countervailing acts intended for our protection, but they were made inapplicable to vessels of Great Britain coming from her ports opened to our vessels on like terms with hers, soon after her repeal in 1849, of the act of 1651 and its amendments. Up to that period there were numerous changes in the policy of both countries with respect to their over-sea trade with each other.

Previous to 1794 a portion of our productions were admitted to British colonial ports, but they could be carried only in British vessels. This policy was met by the acts of Congress of 1789, chapters 2 and 3, one imposing a higher duty on goods, wares, and merchandise imported in foreign vessels than if imported in American, and the other a higher tonnage duty on the entry of foreign ships than on the entry of our own. In 1790 another discriminating act was passed.

In 1794 a treaty was made in which Great Britain conceded to us, during the continuance of her war with France and for two years after, the privilege of carrying our productions (but none other) to British colonial islands in our vessels, *of not exceeding seventy tons burden*, and of bringing back the productions of those islands in such vessels to the United States, but we were restricted from carrying their molasses, sugar, coffee, cocoa, or cotton, either from those islands or from the United States to any other parts of the

world, and were to land and retain them in the United States. Great Britain, in return, exacted the right of trade between those islands and the United States *in vessels of any tonnage.* The treaty also provided, among other things, for trade with a few ports in the East Indies, and for reciprocal trade between the United States and the British territories in Europe.

General Jackson, in his message of December, 1830, states that this treaty, on account of its hard provisions, was rejected by the Senate. This is a mistake. It was ratified, and went into effect. But it was very soon disregarded in great part by Great Britain during her French war, and our vessels of all descriptions were extensively seized, and confiscated or burned, not only by Great Britain, but by France. By the Treaty of Amiens the war between England and France was terminated in 1802. But in 1803 it was renewed.

In 1804 we raised our tariff on some articles, and in 1806 (April 18th) closed our ports against British ships, mercantile and naval. Great Britain retaliated by an increase of duties on her part, discriminating against foreign vessels. This non-importation act of 1806 was suspended to permit a further treaty. In 1807 another treaty between the two powers was signed, but Jefferson refused assent to it, and it was not sent to the Senate for ratification. The war of 1812 put an end to retaliatory legislation on both sides, and of course to all mutual trade. During the war of 1812 the low tariff on imports, existing at its commencement, was raised 100 per cent, if brought in American vessels, and 110 if brought in foreign, both rates to continue only during the war and for a year after.

In 1815, after the treaty of peace, a new treaty of commerce, to last four years, was entered into, providing for mutual liberty of commerce as to their respective productions between the United States and British territories in Europe. This treaty was extended in 1818 for ten years in the expectation, on our part, that the colonies would be included), and in 1827 indefinitely. It made no concessions to us with respect to colonial trade, except with a few ports in the East Indies. The trade between British col-

onies generally and the United States was prohibited to us, but was enjoyed by British vessels, greatly to our disadvantage, subject, however, to duties on goods and tonnage, which discriminated against their vessels. The "circuitous trade," as it was called, between our ports and British ports in Europe was enjoyed by their vessels, and not by ours. Our exports to Europe were of bulky articles chiefly, and as the return cargoes were of articles of small bulk, the trade in which we could engage was not profitable.

In January, 1817, all efforts to arrange with respect to the colonial trade having failed, Congress raised the tonnage duty from 50 cents a ton to $2 per ton on the entry of foreign vessels in the United States, from any port with which our vessels were not permitted to trade. The act further provided, as to such nations as have adopted a like provision, that "no merchandise should be imported into the United States except in vessels of the United States, or in such foreign vessels as wholly belong to the citizens or subjects of that country of which the merchandise is the growth, production, or manufacture, or from which it can only be or most usually is first shipped for transportation." This clause, substantially, appears in the British Navigation Act of 1651, and was still in force in 1817.

In April, 1818, a further act was passed that the ports of the United States should be closed to the vessels of Great Britain coming from any colonial ports of hers, that were closed against our vessels. In May, 1820, an act supplementary to the one of April, 1818, was also passed by us.

On the 24th of June, 1822, the British Parliament opened numerous specified colonial ports to the vessels of all nations, on the condition of reciprocity as respects British vessels, and further, that only such exports as were enumerated in the act should be carried to such colonies. This act excluded some of our most valuable exports.

The act having been communicated to our Government, Congress, on the 1st of March, 1823, consented to its terms, and provided that on its repeal, or upon notice from the council of Great Britain that the privileges under it would terminate, the privilege of the trade with us on the part of

British vessels should also terminate, after a proclamation by the President to that effect had been made.

On the 5th of July, 1825, Parliament repealed the act of June 24th, 1822, and on the same day passed another act, opening her colonial ports on different terms from those of the act of 1822 to nations which reciprocated. It was provided that those governments which did not accept its provisions before the time specified, in a notice to be given by the council, should be debarred from its privileges. Such notice was served on our Government, and the time was allowed to elapse without accepting.

Mr. Adams, then President, in order to arrange anew for the colonial trade, sent a special envoy to Great Britain to negotiate with respect to it, but the envoy was met, says Mr. Adams in his message of December 9th, 1825, by an order from the British Council excluding, from the 1st of December, 1826, the vessels of the United States from the specified colonial ports, excepting those bordering on our territory. Mr. Adams complains that Great Britain's refusal to negotiate was on the ground that trade with the colonies was the exclusive possession of the power owning the colonies. That it was a subject for home legislation, and not negotiation. The British ministry refused to allow us to enjoy even the trade which the Parliamentary act of 1825 had provided, as its privileges were not accepted in time. It authorized trade with certain of the British colonies by the vessels of all nations, which by a certain time reciprocated, and permitted them to clear from the colonies with their productions to any port of the world, *Great Britain and her dependencies excepted.* But only certain specified articles of export to those colonies might be carried. The act of 1822 was more favorable to us than that of 1825. Mr. Adams waited to see what action Congress would take. It failed to take any, and on the 27th of March, 1827, he issued the proclamation authorized by the act of March 1st, 1823, which placed the colonial trade on the basis on which it stood prior to the passage of the last-mentioned act.

Soon after General Jackson entered the Presidency he sent Mr. McLane to England charged with the special duty

of reopening this trade. General Jackson became convinced that Great Britain would consent to open the act of 1825, and, in anticipation of the conclusion of arrangements for the purpose, suggested to Congress, just previous to an expected adjournment, to pass in advance the requisite act for subsequently carrying them into effect. This act was passed on the 31st of May, 1830, to the satisfaction of Great Britain; and the latter consented that the meagre privileges of the act of 1825 should be applied to the United States on receiving the President's proclamation that he was satisfied that the conditions of our act had been complied with.

On the 5th of October, 1830, the President issued such proclamation, and on the 5th of the succeeding month a British order in council was issued, again opening the trade with the colonies.

At this time the treaty of 1815 (extended indefinitely in 1827, as mentioned above), applicable to the trade between the United States and British territories in Europe, was in force, as well as the last-mentioned order in council, applicable to the trade with the colonial ports.

General Jackson, in his message of 1830 (December), communicating the arrangements concluded on the 5th of November, 1830, mentions that "the abstract right of Great Britain to monopolize the trade with her colonies, or to exclude us from participation therein, had never been denied by the United States"!

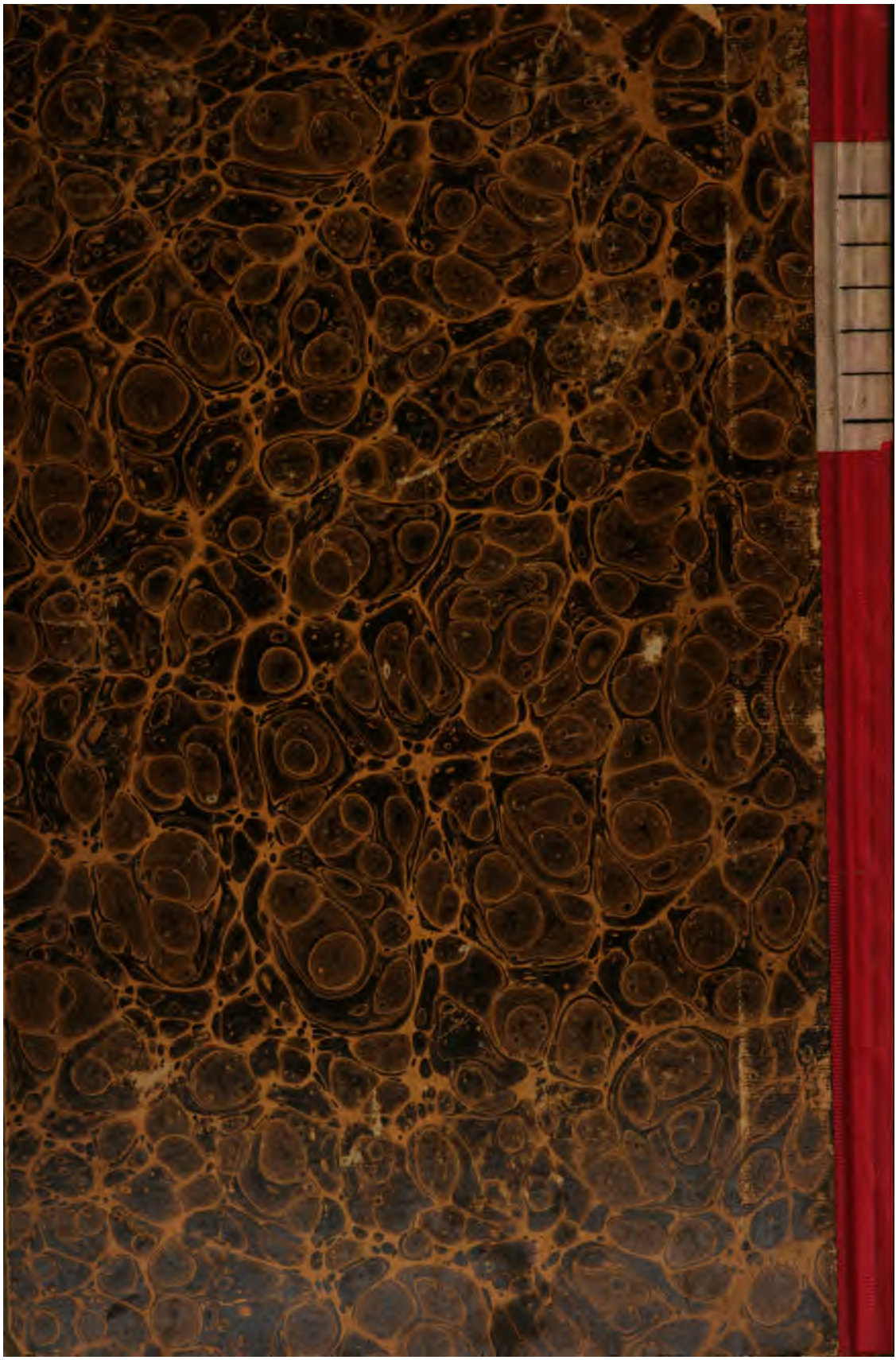
In 1842 our tariff on importations was made 10 per cent higher on goods imported in foreign vessels over what was charged on those imported in American, but it was not to apply to nations with which we had treaties, and has not been applied to British ships.

Such was the situation at the time of the repeal in 1849 of the British Navigation Acts, and the consequent opening of the ports of the United States to British vessels on perfect equality with our vessels, except as to our coasting and internal trade.

At the time of such repeal in 1849 by Parliament, the highly subsidized Cunard line had been in existence nine years. It was profitable, and there was then no competition

with it on the part of steamers, and no fear of competition from any power. Its capacity for great proportions and as a model for other lines extending over the world, was seen; and its establishment was properly regarded in 1860, as stated in the "Encyclopædia Britannica," as "an epoch in the world's history." Training in all these lines has been the principal educator in steam navigation, of the British people. Every improvement which experience suggested was applied.

Their situation to-day, triumphant on every sea, and ours successful in none, except in our coasting trade (wisely covered by protection), or where competition with us is difficult, show conclusively that the repeal of the Navigation Acts by them, was so timed and managed and prepared for by means of protection for two centuries; by the accumulation of capital and manufacturing power and capacity; and by subsidies and governmental favor; and was so soon followed by the change from wood to iron and the side-wheel to the screw, then in progress; that it carried out the terms of the Queen's message to be "without danger to our (their) maritime strength," and to "promote the commercial and colonial interests of the empire."

The opposite has been the effect upon our commerce of our resulting measures. We were in no respect ready for the contest then just opening. Those measures have aided to destroy our maritime strength and to reduce our foreign commerce under our own flag, to a nominal amount. If we would have a respectable mercantile marine, and a navy equal to that of either France, Germany, Russia, or the Netherlands, to say nothing of that of Great Britain, who dominates all seas, we should retrace our unfortunate path, and by being as wise as our rivals, establish both on a solid basis. The time has now come in our national growth and development for us to recover permanently our share of ocean trade and foreign commerce. With prompt and wise action on the part of the government, this can be accomplished.

The following resolutions are recommended for adoption: